

CONNECTING, INFORMING, INSPIRING



Australia-Indonesia Youth Association
(AIYA)

Submission to the 'Towards 2025:
Australia's Indonesia Strategy in the
Asian Century'

May 2013
aiya.org.au

Australia in the Asian Century Implementation Unit
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
R.G. Casey Building
John McEwen Crescent
Barton ACT 0221

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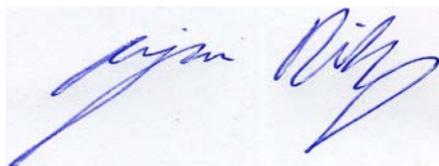
RE: Australia-Indonesia Youth Association submission to the Australia in the Asian Century White Paper Indonesian Country Strategy

Please find attached our submission to the Indonesian Country Strategy.

The Australia-Indonesia Youth Association (AIYA) is a non-government organisation operating across Australia and with a growing presence in Indonesia. AIYA aims to connect young Indonesian and Australian graduates of Australian universities to each other and to Indonesia related opportunities.

We welcome this opportunity to contribute our ideas regarding the future direction of the Australia-Indonesia bilateral relationship.

Yours sincerely,



Arjuna Dibley
Executive Director and Co-Founder
Australia-Indonesia Youth
Association (AIYA)



Chris Urbanski
Director and Co-Founder
Conference of Australian and
Indonesian Youth (CAUSINDY)

Acknowledgements

This submission was written and prepared by Michael Tarn, Jessica Laughlin, Chris Urbanski and Arjuna Dibley. It is intended to supplement the submission made by the Australia-Indonesia Youth Association (AIYA) — available [here](#) — to the original *Australia in the Asian Century* White Paper consultations and our response to the White Paper, available [here](#).

Summary of Recommendations

This submission is intended to inform the development of the Australia-Indonesia relationship based on the experiences of young Australians and Indonesians. To shape our submission, we have surveyed our members in Australia and Indonesia. We received 206 survey responses.

The recommendations in this submission are based on the key thematic trends our survey uncovered, as well as our organisational experience in furthering connections between Australia and Indonesia.

Our recommendations are that the Australian government should:

1. Work with the Indonesian government to resolve bureaucratic hurdles involved with Australians wanting to access the Work and Holiday visa.
2. Develop an information pack about the visas available for Australian businesses and universities regarding the most appropriate visas for interns.
3. Involve a greater cross-section of both Australian and Indonesian societies in the bilateral relationship through a diversification of engagement efforts, which could include holding another OzFest.
4. Launch an online cultural centre to promote Australian / Indonesian lifestyle and cultural activities, supported by coordinated social media outreach and fixed or mobile physical centre (s) in Jakarta.
5. Expand the AsiaBound grant program and ensure inclusion of university consortiums such as ACICIS.
6. Form a unified alumni network for all inbound/outbound scholarship programs that receive Australian government funding and support network-building events between current participants abroad with returned alumni from the opposite country.
7. Expand initiatives that support in-country study in Asia such as AsiaBound to include later year high school students.
8. Make more internships/secondments or other short-term work placements publically available within Australian Government offices in Indonesia.
9. Create more opportunities for young people to participate in the formal structures of the Australia Indonesia relationship.
10. Determine a national criteria and accreditation framework to define and measure Asia capability for individuals and organisations and implement this in public sector recruitment processes.

Introduction

As a non-government organisation committed to improving the people-to-people relationship between Australia and Indonesia, the Australia Indonesia Youth Association (AIYA) is excited about this opportunity to share the perspective of young people on this important domestic and foreign policy subject.

Involving young people in the relationship is vital; half of Indonesia's population is currently aged under 30 years and it is the Indonesian and Australian youth of today who will be the leaders in the Asian Century.¹ The recent lived experience of our members also means they are well placed to discuss problems with current engagement models and to contribute innovative solutions and policy suggestions.

In preparing this submission, AIYA surveyed its membership base in order to provide a unique perspective on the challenges and opportunities for deepening engagement with Indonesia. Our members have told us that the most critical aspects of the relationship today and the future are: (1) close government-to-government relationships; (2) strong economic ties (including trade and investment); and (3) education. Meanwhile the biggest impediments to the relationship are seen as (1) cultural misunderstanding; (2) mutual suspicion; and (3) the inability of political leaders to successfully engage each other.²

In synthesising the issues raised by our members we recognise the government is operating in a tight fiscal environment and adoption of new policy is likely to require decisions around rebalancing existing resources rather than injections of new funding at scale. Likewise, we realise that managing our engagement with Indonesia is a bilateral process — this adds to the complexity of policy implementation.

Through this submission, we seek to balance the aspirations of our members for the future relationship with these practical considerations in order to advance recommendations that are effective, achievable and deliver maximum results.

In the following pages we outline a series of recommendations in five opportunity areas falling within the 'Connecting Communities' section of the *Towards 2025: Australia's Indonesia Strategy in the Asian Century*:

1. Addressing immigration barriers;
2. Addressing poor cultural perceptions;
3. Fostering people-to-people links between young people;
4. Creating a youth perspective in the bilateral relationship; and
5. Boosting demand for Indonesia capability through indirect measures.

¹ Simon Montlake, "2013 Forbes Billionaires List: Southeast Asia's Silver Tycoons Creak into View", *Forbes*, 3 May 2013, accessed at <http://www.forbes.com/sites/simonmontlake/2013/03/05/2013-forbes-billionaires-list-southeast-asias-silver-tycoons-creak-into-view/>

² Australia-Indonesia Youth Association, 2013. Members were asked to nominate the three most important aspects, and three greatest impediments to the bilateral relationship.

About AIYA

AIYA was founded in 2011 as a youth-led organisation looking to build a community of young people passionate about the Australia-Indonesia relationship. Our National Executive is formed of early career professionals with extensive Indonesia experience. AIYA has university-based chapters in every Australian state and territory and a growing presence in Indonesia, with plans to expand beyond our current Jakarta home base.

AIYA's mission is to increase the number of Indonesia-literate Australian students and graduates working in, and on, Indonesia, as volunteers, interns and in paid employment.

We achieve this by:

- Connecting youth through networking events
- Increasing awareness of the Australia-Indonesia relationship through our media work and submissions to government
- Brokering placement of suitable individuals to work/ study/ internship opportunities
- Policy submissions and issue advocacy for members
- Annual CAUSINDY conference — our flagship youth dialogue which brings together high caliber emerging leaders

Our survey this year established that AIYA members are:

- Professionals (39 per cent) or undergraduate students (33 per cent);
- Work predominantly in Professional Services (33 per cent) or Government / Defence (30 per cent) sectors;
- Below 35 years of age (82 per cent);
- Studied Indonesian at university (88 per cent) or in high school (43 per cent);
- Would consider a career in Indonesia (84 per cent) or Australia (80 per cent), and;
- Advanced (36 per cent) or fluent (19 per cent) in their Indonesian language abilities.

1. People mobility: resolve immigration obstacles

Issues Paper: 'How can we improve visa processes to better connect communities in our respective countries?'

Increased people mobility between Australia and Indonesia is one of the most effective approaches to improving the bilateral relationship. Our members' survey found that the best way to deepen understanding of the Australia-Indonesia relationship is cultural exchange (68 per cent).

Our members wrote:

Cultural ties (esp at people-to-people level) are hugely important, and something that has not historically been seen as significant to Indo-Aus relationship.

Cultural exchange initiatives have been the greatest platform to deepen my understanding of the Aus-Indo relationship...

You can't learn about a country from a book, you need to experience it first hand.

However, immigration barriers remain the real 'sticking point' in attempts to build greater people-to-people contact between Australia and Indonesia. The difficulties faced by young people in accessing visa schemes can act as a significant disincentive to personal and professional engagement.

In our survey this year, 35 per cent of respondents thought there was a role for the Australian government to play in improving immigration outcomes for Australians and Indonesians. Similarly, to encourage more Indonesians to engage with Australia, immigration barriers to enter and remain in Australia were seen as a priority area needing to be addressed (54 per cent).

To progress increased people mobility two priority areas are:

- Improving the Work and Holiday visa scheme for Australians going to Indonesia;
- Clarifying what visa, if any, Australians can use to complete internships in Indonesia.

Regarding the Work and Holiday visa, according to a survey undertaken of our members in 2012, only 3 of our surveyed members had taken up use of this visa and

those who applied for the visa had experienced significant bureaucratic delay and difficulty upon arrival with Indonesian immigration.³

AIYA understands that there are limits on the extent to which the Australian government can improve internal visa processes in Indonesia; however, we believe there is a role for the government to play in working collaboratively with Indonesia to improve access for Australians wanting to visit Indonesia on the Work and Holiday visa — particularly given that this visa subclass awards reciprocal work rights to Indonesians visiting Australia.

On the issue of visa requirements for Australians undertaking internships in Indonesia, AIYA’s research with a number of businesses (including major Australian banks with operations in Indonesia), Australian government agencies in Indonesia, and educational institutions in Indonesia, reveals that there is great uncertainty about what visa Australians can use to complete internships in-country.

In part, there is confusion about whether the Work and Holiday visa can be used for this purpose and because of the lack of clarity over what restrictions apply on this visa.

We are aware of some members who have had to undertake internship schemes illegally because their employers were unsure of what visa scheme to put them on (or put them on the wrong scheme).

AIYA has had limited success lobbying Australian businesses with operations in Indonesia to provide internship positions. Frequently, we are told that one of the most significant challenges is the lack of clarity on what visa interns can use.

Recommendation: the Australian government work with the Indonesian government to resolve bureaucratic hurdles involved with Australians wanting to access the Work and Holiday visa.

Recommendation: the Australian government develops an information pack for Australian businesses and universities about the most appropriate Indonesian visas that can be used by interns.

³ AIYA, Submission to the “Australia in the Asian Century White Paper”, 26 February 2012, accessed at http://asiancentury.dpmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/public-submissions/aiya_0.pdf, 9.

2. Cultural engagement: perceptions matter

Issues Paper: 'How can we strengthen sporting, art and cultural collaboration between our communities?'

In our member survey, cultural misunderstanding (62 per cent), mutual suspicion (41 per cent) and the inability of political leaders to successfully engage each other (35 per cent) were ranked as the most significant impediments to the Australia-Indonesian relationship. Members also identified attending cultural exchange activities was the single most effective means (68 per cent) of deepening their understanding of the Australia-Indonesia relations.

These findings are supported by academic research. Lowy Institute polling for a number of years has identified issues of mutual distrust and misunderstanding between Australians and Indonesians⁴ which often stands in direct contrast to the good relations shared at higher levels of the relationship. Meanwhile, Tim Lindsey has written that while Australians who have an interest or connection to Indonesia 'tend to see the bilateral relationship as important, mutually beneficial, resilient and strong', wider Australian society largely views the bilateral relationship as 'difficult, tense and unnecessary'.⁵ In summary, perceptions matter a lot and effective cultural engagement is paramount in shaping these.

In bringing more of the Australian public into contact with Indonesians and Indonesian culture (and vice versa), the Australian government should look to contemporary forms of cultural engagement. We would welcome developments that promote Indonesian pop-culture, reallocate funding to contemporary art and cultural events, fund tours of Australian bands to Indonesia and invite Indonesian artists to Australia.

Examples of innovative cultural exchange already happening between our two countries include an upcoming joint Asialink / AIYA event showcasing bilateral collaboration through the arts.⁶ Similarly, the Australian government should look to sponsor a further OzFest in Indonesia in coming years as a valuable way of promoting Australia.

⁴ Lowy Institute polls and publications can be accessed here: <http://www.lowyinstitute.org/publications>

⁵ Tim Lindsey, 'Preposterous Caricatures': Fear, Tokenism and Denial and the Australia-Indonesia Relationship" (2010) 29 (2) *Dialogue* 31, 34.

⁶ "Next Gen Series: Building creative connections between Australia and Indonesia", more information available here:

http://www.asialink.unimelb.edu.au/calendar/events/featured/next_gen_series_building_creative_connections_between_australia_and_indonesia

Engagement efforts should also promote initiatives in a more systemic way. This will then enable the government to derive more benefit from promotion of 'brand Australia'. Currently, several countries do this effectively in Indonesia through structured cultural centres. For instance, the US does this through the @america centre⁷ and the Dutch government has Erasmous Haus.⁸

The value of these cultural centres is that they provide a key point of contact with the Indonesian public — thereby moving beyond contact purely at the government level. They also provide a one-stop-shop for information outside the cultural sphere, such as work and study opportunities and promoting tourism.

AIYA believes that Australian government should establish a cultural engagement strategy in order to coordinate key cultural events between Australia and Indonesia. Establishing this framework would be one of the preliminary steps in facilitating an equivalent Australian centre.

The centrepiece of this strategy should be an online web portal - properly integrated into social media and optimized for mobile devices - which collates and promotes all cultural/sporting/arts engagement events occurring in each country.

Our rationale for a primarily non-physical cultural outreach approach is as follows:

- The state of transport infrastructure in Indonesian cities add considerable time costs to accessing a physical site;
- Lower rates of urbanisation require an extensive physical footprint across a host of tier-2 cities to achieve adequate coverage;
- a considerably lower cost to DFAT, and;
- Indonesia has experienced an astonishing take up of online and mobile technology with near universal access to online content.

The case for an online cultural centre is supported by an extensive fact base. Data from Socialbakers lists Indonesia as the world's fourth biggest user of Facebook with over 48 million members⁹; in 2012, Forbes Magazine named Jakarta as the world's most active city on Twitter in terms of posted tweets¹⁰ — mobile phone penetration

⁷ Normitsu Onishi, "US Updates the Brand it Promotes in Indonesia", *New York Times*, March 5 2011, accessed at http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/06/world/asia/06indonesia.html?_r=0

⁸ More information available here: <http://erasmushuis.nlmission.org/>

⁹ Socialbakers, "Indonesia Facebook Statistics", accessed at <http://www.socialbakers.com/facebook-statistics/indonesia>

¹⁰ Victor Lipman, "The World's Most Active Twitter City? You Won't Guess it", *Forbes*, 30 December 2012, accessed at <http://www.forbes.com/sites/victorlipman/2012/12/30/the-worlds-most-active-twitter-city-you-wont-guess-it/>

is 80 phones per 100 people.¹¹ Further, in our member survey, 46 per cent of our members said that social media was used as one of the best ways to deepen their knowledge of the Australia-Indonesia relationship.

Given Indonesia's rapid social media uptake and our members' preference for online information, our belief is that an online cultural centre may be just as valuable as a physical centre. Nonetheless, a physical cultural centre should be considered as a supporting pillar to an online cultural centre. Mobile physical centres – transportable by semi-trailer – could also be considered as a low cost means of bringing an Australian cultural presence to festivals, campuses and community centres around Jakarta.

Recommendation: The Australian government involves a greater cross-section of Australian and Indonesian societies in the bilateral relationship through a diversification of engagement efforts, which could include holding another OzFest.

Recommendation: The Australian government launches an online cultural centre to promote Australian / Indonesian lifestyle and cultural activities, supported by coordinated social media outreach and fixed or mobile physical centre (s) in Jakarta.

¹¹ Mariel Grazella, "Data services will drive up operators revenue in 2013", *Jakarta Post*, February 11 2013, accessed at <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2013/02/11/data-services-will-drive-operators-revenue-2013.html>

3. Fostering people to people links at the youth level

Issues Paper: 'How can we capitalise on existing links and programs — for example how can we better capitalise on diaspora and alumni networks?'

Building people to people links at the youth level will be critical to shaping the future relationship. We believe that fostering people to people links at the youth level yields the maximum benefit in deepening our engagement with Indonesia. Our logic is that this segment is unique in being:

- Committed to a career and lifestyle trajectory that includes Indonesian engagement; and
- Have the maximum remaining time in the workforce to benefit from people to people networks.

Australia has a world-class tertiary sector that attracts students from Indonesia well in excess of the number supported by scholarship programs. For instance, almost 18,000 Indonesian students studied in Australia in 2011.¹² However, this is largely a one-sided exchange: an average of 53 Australian students were studying in Indonesia at any given time between 2007 and 2011.¹³

The small volume of Australians studying in Indonesia means that — unlike in Indonesia — there are relatively few high profile Australians with Indonesian language and cultural skills. There have now been four Indonesian cabinet ministers who have had meaningful in-country experience at Australian universities, they include Chatib Basri, Boediono, Marty Natalegawa and Mari Pangestu.¹⁴ As far as AIYA is aware, Australia has never had a cabinet member with meaningful in-country experience in Indonesia or Indonesian language skills.

Over many years, large cohorts of Indonesian have studied in Australia. As a result, a number of Indonesians who have reached the senior echelons of business and government have in-country experience in Australia.

Given Australia's smaller population it is not feasible that Australia attempts to match number-for-number Indonesian students studying in Australia. However, in

¹² DFAT, *Australia in the Asian Century: Indonesia Profile*, accessed at <http://www.dfat.gov.au/publications/asian-century/downloads/indonesia.pdf>

¹³ David Hill, *Indonesian language in Australian universities: strategies for a stronger future*, second edition (with corrections), Australian Learning and Teaching Council National Teaching Fellowship Final Report, Murdoch University, Perth, April 2012, 28.

¹⁴ Georgie Nielsen and Stacey Post, "Indonesian cabinet stacked with ANU talent", *ANU media*, 24 May 2013 accessed at <http://asiapacific.anu.edu.au/news-events/all-stories/indonesian-cabinet-stacked-anu-talent#.UacH7WQ9oSg>

order for young Australians and Indonesians to develop meaningful people-to-people contact, a large increase in the current number of students studying in Indonesia is required. AIYA believes the critical mass of students to ensure an adequate pipeline of Indonesia experienced graduates is 1500 - 2000 Australians per year.

To support an expansion of Australian students studying in Indonesia, it is necessary to support the programs that facilitate student in-country experience. AIYA was dismayed to learn that university consortiums such as ACICIS were excluded from the AsiaBound grant program.¹⁵ Many survey respondents specifically mentioned the ACICIS in-country programs as a beneficial experience. The ACICIS program serves a vital role in coordinating cultural understanding efforts among Australian universities.

Further, to support an increase in the Australian in-country student population of this magnitude, it will be necessary to promote in-country education for students outside of formal Indonesia or Asian Studies degree programs. Tertiary subjects delivered in Indonesia by Australian universities (potentially in collaboration with local partners) would be one way to induce more students to spend a part of their degree in-country while minimizing disruption to their program.

Australia also directs a large part of its aid budget to the Australia Award program — with estimated funding for scholarships to Indonesian students in 2013/14 expected to reach \$646.8 million.¹⁶ Given this high level of investment and the high profile of many alumni, it is surprising that there remains a lack of focus on maintaining links with Indonesian alumni of Australian universities once they return home.

Similarly, more can be done to reach out to Australian alumni of Indonesian universities given that this pool of talented and passionate individuals will be essential to Australia's ability to successfully navigate the challenges and opportunities of the Asian Century.

AIYA believes there is opportunity to better leverage alumni networks for all inbound and outbound Australian and Indonesian university students who receive Australian investment, whether through scholarships or in Commonwealth supported places. This could involve making sure that the new AsiaBound scheme involves a structured and updated alumni network. In particular, alumni networks should be used to bring

¹⁵ Daniella White, "Australia, Indonesia Build Relations from the Ground Up", February 17 2013, *Jakarta Globe*, accessed at <http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/archive/australia-indonesia-build-relations-from-the-ground-up/>

¹⁶ AusAID, *Indonesia*, accessed at <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/countries/eastasia/indonesia/Pages/home.aspx>

current in-country students in contact with returned university students or alumni from the other country.

Lastly, it is important to stress that people-to-people links do not only occur at the tertiary or early professional stage. AIYA also sees scope to complement outbound tertiary study programs with short-course programs targeted at penultimate and final year high school students. From an analysis of survey results, there appears to be a linear relationship between students studying Indonesian at primary school, through to high school, and universities, provided the subject was offered. For instance, 43 per cent of members had studied Indonesian at high school and 19 per cent had studied at primary school.

Recommendation: The Australian government expands the AsiaBound grant program and ensures inclusion of university consortiums such as ACICIS.

Recommendation: The Australian government facilitates the formation of a unified alumni network for all inbound/outbound scholarship programs that receive Australian government funding and support network-building events between current participants abroad with returned alumni from the opposite country.

Recommendation: Expand initiatives that support in-country study in Asia such as AsiaBound to include later year high school students.

4. Creating a youth perspective in the bilateral relationship

A number of factors feed into a lack of demand for Indonesian studies, including a lack of employer driven demand for Indonesia-literacy. From a youth perspective, a factor that limits demand for Indonesia studies is the perception that businesses and government agencies do not value this field of study.

As one survey respondent wrote:

I believe there needs to be more emphasis placed on developing the Australia-Indonesia relationship in ways other than education. Although there are obvious benefits for Indonesians coming to study in Australia — there are near to no benefits of Australians learning the Indonesian language if there is no way to use it for a career outside of education.

There is a trend of young people becoming increasingly disengaged with Indonesian Studies. This trend is disappointing as youth engagement presents one of the great opportunities of the Asian Century. Half of the Indonesian population is aged under 30 years and many interesting initiatives in the relationship were started by young people. For example, in 1951, aged 20, Herb Feith set up Australian Volunteers International.¹⁷ Further, in context of discussions about Asia literacy, young people have recent lived experiences of existing programs and have a detailed understanding of the problems with current models. Therefore, we deserve a place at the table.

AIYA appreciates the good work that DFAT does to try and address declining interest in Indonesia Studies through initiatives such as AIYEP and the Muslim Youth Exchange. Another way that this trend could be reversed is by creating opportunities for young people with Indonesia capabilities and raising the profile of Australians with Indonesia skills and knowledge.

AIYA is working to overcome both these issues through our 'career champions'¹⁸ and our Conference of Australian and Indonesia Youth (CAUSINDY) that is, in part, about allowing young people to see the opportunities available to them by pursuing Indonesian Studies.

¹⁷ Australian Volunteers International, *About Herb Feith*, accessed at <http://www.australianvolunteers.com/about-us-/who-we-are/our-story/herb-feith.aspx>

¹⁸ AIYA, *Career Champions*, accessed at <http://www.aiya.org.au/career-champions/>

We think that there is a key role for government in this as well, by:

- Offering internships in Australian government offices in Indonesia; and
- Offering young people opportunities to participate in the formal structures of the bilateral relationship.

The Australian government should look to develop internship opportunities for young people. This would enable them to continue their engagement with Indonesia during the formative professional years after university and is vital in ensuring that students who develop Indonesia-literacy are able to use it in a professional capacity.

Gateway entry-level positions in Indonesia are not very accessible and navigating the immigration system is difficult (as discussed earlier in this submission). AIYA supports more internships and short-term work assignments (such as secondments, or international postings) as one way of increasing opportunities for young people to engage their Indonesian skills in a work context.

In fact, the 2012 member AIYA survey revealed that many Indonesian-speaking Australians are not utilising their Indonesian language abilities. Less than 50 per cent of respondents reported that they used their Indonesian language skills in their current employment.¹⁹

Some Australian Government agencies in Indonesia do offer internships. AIYA members, for instance, have undertaken internships at the Jakarta office of the Australian Trade Commission and Australian Aid offices. However, these internships tend to be informally arranged and developed through contacts within these institutions.

Outside of formal work experiences, AIYA believes that DFAT can play a role in creating incentives for young people to develop Indonesia capability by creating opportunities for young people to participate in the formal structures of the bilateral relationship.

Youth representatives could be invited to participate in the whole Indonesia-Australia dialogue — this could include representatives from student bodies such as PPIA or youth organisations such as AIYA.

¹⁹ AIYA, Submission to the “Australia in the Asian Century White Paper”, 26 February 2012, accessed at http://asiancentury.dpmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/public-submissions/aiya_0.pdf, 16.

Government could also establish a youth representative for the Australia-Indonesia relationship through the creation of a youth representative position (similar to the UN youth representative) chosen annually who reports to DFAT.

Finally, a youth representative could be appointed to key government advisory bodies such as the Australia Indonesia Institute Board and / or the Asian Century Strategic Advisory Board.

The inclusion of young people in this way would recognise the valuable contribution that youth organisations can make to public debate, as well as the fact that young people often have recent lived experiences of existing programs and are aware of strengths and weaknesses of current models.

Recommendation: The Australian government makes more internships / secondments or other short-term work placements publically available within its offices in Indonesia.

Recommendation: The Australian government creates more opportunities for young people to participate in the formal structures of the bilateral relationship.

5. Boosting demand for Indonesia capability through indirect measures

Issues Paper: 'What more can government do to support the work of communities and business?'

AIYA believes that the ability of future leaders to successfully engage their Indonesian counterparts is paramount. Our survey results show that 35 per cent of our members said that the inability of leaders to successfully engage with each other is the greatest impediment to deepening engagement.

The role of government in ensuring sufficient Asia capabilities among senior business and government should be focused on fostering a pipeline of suitably qualified workers. This strategy would be more effective than setting target quotas, which would we believe would introduce inefficiency to staffing decisions and the labour market more broadly.

Through providing the appropriate labour market definitions and frameworks, government can serve as a market-maker for the supply and demand of Asia capabilities in the labour market.

With a means to measure and describe these capabilities, employers will be in a position to discriminate between prospective employees, and place a discrete valuation on these skills. The benefits of this are two-fold:

- Provides a return to skills and training investment of Asia capable employees which will incentivise greater study of these over time; and
- Creates discrete career tracks for Asia capable workers to reach senior echelons of their chosen occupation.

This accreditation can be also create value at an organisational level — for example, government can set criteria and accredit organisations as 'Asia Ready' where they have sufficient levels of in-country programs / expertise to be considered a business, or employer of choice for clients or jobseekers seeking engagement with Asia. Asialink's '11 Critical Capabilities' for individual and organisational Asia capability provides a starting point for this.²⁰

²⁰ Asialink, *Developing an Asia Capable Workforce*, accessed at http://www.asialink.unimelb.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/619793/Developing_an_Asia_Capable_Workforce.pdf, 1415.

Recommendation: the Australian government determines a national criteria and accreditation framework to define and measure Asia capability for individuals and organisations and implement this in public sector recruitment processes